

Honors program nurtures student research endeavors

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Honors Summer Research Grant recipients, like Madeline Ninno, pictured at the Latin American Library, work closely with faculty mentors, who help guide their projects. (Photo by Paula Burch-Celentano)

When Tulane University junior Madeline Ninno leaves for her study-abroad session in Argentina this fall, she'll go with insights gained from her independent research project on the history of that country's beef industry.

In Argentina, beef isn't just a food staple; it's almost a measure of national pride. When she learned she would be studying there, Ninno, who is double majoring in economics and international development in the School of Liberal Arts, decided to pursue a project that enhanced her understanding of the country and its people.

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Sophomore Lydia Woolley also pursued a research project this summer. Her project applied the the work of French psychiatrist and psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan to themes in Toni Morrison's novel *Paradise*.

Both students received grants from the Newcomb-Tulane [Honors Summer Research Program](#), which enabled them to turn their individual interests into research projects and allowed them to support themselves outside the academic year.

Grants are awarded to eligible honors students from all fields of study, regardless of research background or experience. Summer research scholars work closely with faculty mentors, who help guide their projects.

Woolley, who majors in English and political science with a minor in Arabic, said the grant allowed her to focus fully on the project, which involved applying complex behavioral principles and literary themes.

After she read the novel and its criticisms, "I tried to find [analyses] that were from that neo-Lacanian perspective, and then I read more literature that related to the ideas that I thought popped up in the novel the most. And in the end I tried to synthesize those three things," Woolley said.

Ninno expected to undertake a quantitative analysis of Argentina's relationship with beef, but found herself immersed in the [Latin American Library's](#) midcentury cookbooks, which illustrated popular attitudes toward beef as almost a "shorthand for prosperity."

"It's so exciting to watch how it unfolds," Ninno said of her research efforts. "I've never worked on a research project that ended up how I thought it would. You always find these surprises along the way."

Other Honors Summer Research Grant recipients include:

Pawan Bhat
Gregory Chauvin
Margaret Conrad
Rory Davis
Sarah Guillaume
Shreya Gunda
Ryan Herrschaft
Lauren Hitt
Christian Hyde
Camilla Kapustina
Charles Kelly
Danielle Kulick
Alexander Ledet
Riley Loria
Allyson Martin
Tess Martin
Alyssa Nielson
Jae Eun Park
Emma Pejko
Deepika Rajkumar
Ashley Stuart
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